



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 January 2023

by Kim Langford Tejrar LLB (Hons) BSc (Hons) PGDIP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D1835/D/22/3304109

6 Woodstock Road, Worcester WR2 5NE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs S Hutchison against the decision of Worcester City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00313/HP, dated 09 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 07 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is 'Proposed two storey side and single storey rear extension (resubmission of application 21/00182/HP)'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the 'proposed two storey side and single storey rear extension (resubmission of application 21/00182/HP)' at 6 Woodstock Road, Worcester WR2 5NE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 22/00313/HP, dated 09 April 2022, subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three (3) years from the date of this decision.
 - (b) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan 20-520-3 Rev P1 and Proposed Plan 20-520-2 Rev P8.
 - (c) Notwithstanding condition (b) above, the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in materials which match the external materials of the existing host dwelling.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Woodstock Road is a residential street comprising primarily of two-storey semi-detached dwellings of a similar early C19th design. The buildings are set-back from the road by a pavement, verge and modest front gardens. The buildings are generally spaced from each other, although there is some variation as

some buildings are link-attached and others are not, also because of a prevalence of side extensions in a variety of styles and scales. Nonetheless, this pattern of development creates a sense of openness, which contributes positively to the local character.

4. The appeal site is typical of the street. It is a semi-detached dwelling link-attached to the adjacent pair by its garage. It is located towards the southern end of Woodstock Road. Nearby Windsor Avenue, which is visible from and close to the appeal site, comprises of dwellings of a similar type arranged in both terraces and semi-detached pairs.
5. The appeal proposal is for a two-storey side extension and a single storey rear extension. Only the two-storey side extension would be visible in the public realm.
6. A previous similar scheme (Council ref. 21/00182/HP) was refused by the Council due to a potential terracing effect. That scheme was subsequently dismissed on appeal (Planning Inspectorate Ref. APP/D1835/D/21/3288485) on the basis of its impact on the open character of the area, due to the lack of gap with the boundary in accordance with the SPD. The Inspector for the appeal acknowledged that a terracing effect would not occur. I have had regard to this decision as a material consideration to the current appeal.
7. Whilst the Council has re-stated that a terracing effect would result from the appeal scheme, I concur with the view of the Inspector for the previous appeal; no terracing would result. The proposed extension has a modest width and the neighbouring property has not extended to the side. In any case, the terraces of Windsor Avenue form part of the built context for the site and a terrace in the location of the appeal site would not be wholly out of character.
8. The spacing between buildings does make a proportionate positive contribution open character of the area. The South Worcestershire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2018 (SPD) provides guidance to the relevant design policies. It seeks to protect the spacious character of areas by requiring a minimum gap of 1 metre from shared boundaries. Whilst the existing garage already abuts the boundary, the proposed side extension would abut the boundary at first-floor level as well, closing the existing gap. The appeal scheme is therefore in conflict with the guidance of the SPD.
9. However, the design of the appeal scheme differs significantly from the previous appeal scheme. It proposes a significant set-back from the front elevation of the property. Whilst this would not retain an actual gap between the properties, it would effectively create the illusion of a gap within the street scene and would retain the existing sense of space between buildings.
10. The Appellant has drawn my attention to other two-storey side extensions in the wider area and I noted the presence of several side extensions in the immediate vicinity during my visit. However, I am not aware of the individual planning histories of some of those sites. A few nearby side extensions had a similar set-back to the proposed appeal scheme and they demonstrated that it presents an effective design solution to the issue of openness. In contrast, other side extensions had designs closer to the previous appeal scheme; these appeared visually discordant with the spacious character of Woodstock Road.

11. For these reasons, I find that the appeal proposal would not follow the guidance of the SPD but it would not conflict with the aims of policy SPD21 to achieve high design quality which integrates effectively with its surroundings.

Conditions

12. The Council has requested a total of three conditions relating to a time limit for the development to begin, approved plans and matching materials. I consider these conditions are necessary and justified to ensure that the development takes place in a timely manner, in accordance with the approved plans and that it is finished in materials which match the existing property, thereby integrating it into the surroundings.

Conclusion

13. I conclude that the appeal scheme would accord with the relevant policies of the development plan and no material considerations indicate that the appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. The appeal is accordingly allowed.

Kim Langford Tejrar

INSPECTOR